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NOTES ON MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

[This department of the ANNALS will endeavor to place before the members of the Academy all items of interest which will serve to indicate the municipal activity of the large cities of Europe and America. Among the contributors are : James W. Pryor, Esq., Secretary City Club, New York City ; Sylvester Baxter, Esq., Boston *Herald*, Boston ; Samuel B. Capen, Esq., President Municipal League, Boston ; Mr. A. L. Crocker, Minneapolis ; Victor Rosewater, Ph. D., Omaha *Bee*, Omaha ; Professor John Henry Gray, Chairman Committee on Municipal Affairs, Civic Federation, Chicago.]

AMERICAN CITIES.

Philadelphia.—The Fourth Annual Message of Mayor Stuart, together with the preliminary financial and administrative reports of departments, give much interesting information concerning the progress in municipal work during the year ending December 31, 1894. A résumé of municipal activity during the Mayor's four-years' term is also given. Considering the work undertaken as well as that actually accomplished, it would seem that Philadelphia is entering upon a new era of public improvements. Street-paving, re-paving and drainage have advanced at an unprecedented rate. To take, for instance, some facts illustrative of this change, we find that during the last four years, nearly one and one-quarter million square yards of street were repaved with modern and improved pavement. This represents twenty-five miles more than the entire surface repaved during the twenty years from 1870 to 1890. In addition, about one and one-half million square yards of new paving were laid during the same period. The additional privileges granted to the passenger railway companies incident to the introduction of the trolley system were made conditional upon the repaving of the streets occupied by such companies, with such material as the Director of Public Works might prescribe. During the two years, 1893 and 1894, the companies repaved, mainly with asphaltum, 181 miles of street. During the last four years, therefore, the city and the street railway companies have paved or repaved a total of over four hundred miles of street. This remarkable change in the condition of the streets of the city involved indirectly a large expenditure for such purposes as drainage ; the laying of such improved pavement as asphaltum making it desirable to place the system of drainage in the very best condition. During the four years from January 1, 1891, nearly fifty-five miles of main and one hundred and ninety miles of branch sewers were constructed. The former represents a total

equal to the entire system of main sewers constructed between 1868 and 1891, whereas the latter is equivalent to the entire mileage of branch sewers constructed during the preceding fourteen years.

Comparing the condition of the streets in 1890 and 1894, we find that in the former there were 755 miles of paved streets, of which 115 were rubble, 375 cobble, 88 macadam roads, and 144 of improved paving (such as asphaltum). In 1894 there were 872.9 miles of improved highways, of which 92 were paved with rubble, 164 with cobbles, 114 of macadam, and 502 of improved pavements.

The report of the Bureau of Water shows a great increase in the facilities for the supply, although very little effort was made to improve its quality. During the four-years' term of the out-going Mayor, over \$4,000,000 was expended in extensions, mainly for the increase of storage and pumping capacity. While in 1890 the pumping capacity per day was about 185,000,000 gallons, in 1894 it was 311,000,000 gallons. The storage capacity of the reservoirs in 1890 was about 869,000,000 gallons; in 1894 it was 1,400,000,000 gallons, an increase of 61 per cent. The per capita consumption of water continues to increase, as is shown by the fact that in 1894 the average daily consumption was over 164 gallons per capita daily (197,000,000 gallons). The rapidly increasing per capita consumption is becoming one of the serious problems of the Water Bureau. That 164 gallons is far beyond the real needs of the city there cannot be the slightest doubt and that quite an appreciable percentage represents willful waste is equally true. One important element is the large amount of water required by the manufacturing establishments. There is no reason, why the taxpayers of Philadelphia should be paying for water consumed by such enterprises. The only possible solution to the question seems to be the introduction of a water meter system. Between 1885 and 1895 the per capita daily consumption of water increased from 72 to 164 gallons. In New York it is at present but 90 gallons, in Boston, 89.3. The water meter system will tend to reduce the waste which these 164 gallons involve, and will at all events distribute the burden of water-rates more equitably.

The city's gas works make a very favorable financial showing in spite of the fact that the price of gas was reduced in 1894 from \$1.50 to \$1.00 per thousand cubic feet. In the estimate of profit, which, during the last four years, has amounted to nearly \$3,000,000, no attempt is made to take into consideration the interest and liquidation of the loans contracted for the construction and extensions of the gas works; a system which would necessarily prevail if the works were under private control, and which the requirements of sound financial administration would seem to dictate. Under such a system,

however, the Philadelphia City Gas Works would show a considerable deficit, even under the old \$1.50 rate. With the reduction of the price of gas to \$1.00 per thousand cubic feet the surplus over operating expenses was but \$192,410. Were we to take into consideration the interest on the investment and allowance for wear and tear the deficit would be over \$850,000, while if the liquidation of the debt contracted for the construction and extension of the works were included the deficit would be nearly one and one-half million dollars. The reasons for the inordinately high cost of manufacture have not as yet been definitely ascertained. That it does cost more than in other cities there can be no doubt.

The general financial condition of the city is excellent, notwithstanding the fact that during the year 1894 the total expenditures were \$32,390,333.57 and the total receipts \$30,689,319.36, showing an excess of expenditure of \$1,700,942.21.

New York City.—The Committee of Seventy of New York City has just published a preliminary report of the Sub-committee on Baths and Lavatories, which makes a strong plea for a complete system of baths and lavatories within the city. The experience of the New York "*Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor*" in the construction of the people's baths, shows the great benefit derived by the poorer classes from such institutions. During the three years of its operation, over 200,000 people have used the baths, and the small charge of five cents per bath goes far toward defraying the entire cost of operation. The experience of Birmingham, Liverpool and other English cities is given, all of which tends to confirm the desirability of the institutions recommended by the committee.

*Review of the Situation in New York City.**

The voters representing two million people living in the City of New York and constituting about one-third of the population of the State, effected a complete overturning of the city government in November, by a vote of three to two. To meet the demands of those who effected this change, several bills were prepared and introduced in the legislature. The most important of these were :

1. A bill giving the mayor power to remove summarily the heads of departments in the city government.
2. A bill to effect the removal of the police justices ; and to make it possible to reform the police courts.
3. A bill to reorganize the department of education.
4. Three bills to reconstruct the police departments.

* This review has been furnished by James W. Pryor, Esq., Secretary of the City Club of New York.

So far as mere legislation could avail, these bills were designed to eradicate some of the greatest and most notorious evils in our municipal government, evils from most of which thousands of the poor and defenceless were suffering daily. The police bills were not introduced until March. The bills prepared by the Lexow Senate Investigating Committee were inadequate to meet the abuses which the investigation had brought to light. Independent measures were then prepared in this city. Of the six measures named, only the first has passed the legislature. All the others have been delayed upon one pretext or another, the real reason being found, however, in the efforts of the politicians to manipulate these bills for political effect, without reference to the interests of New York City or the wishes of its people.

On the fourth of February a mass meeting called by the reform organizations was held in the large hall of Cooper Union. The assembling of a political meeting as large and representative and determined as was this, upon a day three months after an election, was an event almost unprecedented within the memory of the men who are now active in our municipal affairs. The speeches were on a high plane of civic virtue and wisdom, and evidently expressed the views of the great audience. Resolutions calling upon the legislature to pass the reform bills, and denouncing bossism, were adopted. Upon resolution of this meeting the committee which drafted the reform police bills was appointed.

Another mass meeting, equally successful, was held in Cooper Union on the twenty-seventh of March, under the auspices of the Committee of Seventy and other organizations which joined in the call. In addition to resolutions similar to those of the fourth of February this meeting adopted an address to the people of the State, in which the gravity of the situation was clearly brought out.

The earnest efforts of Mayor Strong to carry out the policy to which he is pledged are hardly second in interest to the progress of reform legislation. The consternation of the politicians, when they became convinced that the Mayor proposed to treat as serious the solemn assurances upon which he accepted the nomination from the reform organizations, has been ludicrous. The appointments thus far made have been very much superior to those to which Tammany mayors have accustomed us. With very few exceptions, the people expect the new officers to discharge their duties ably and honestly. At the same time, several of the appointments have been criticised upon the ground that they seem to tend toward a division of spoils among the political bodies which supported the reform candidates. These are appointments of men who are active and prominent in those bodies. The

criticism is made upon principle, and without reflecting in any way upon these men. No matter how excellent the standard of men appointed, such an apportionment of appointments would bring the present administration within the spirit of the system which was overthrown in the recent elections.

Boston.—The retirement of Mayor Matthews, who occupied the position of chief executive for four consecutive terms (of one year each), has been the occasion of an address upon the condition of the city during his administration.* In this review of the administrative and financial condition of the city, Mayor Matthews makes several important recommendations. He advocates the lengthening of the term of the executive from one to two or three years; the appointment of heads of departments for an indeterminate period, that is, until death, resignation or removal; the consolidation of the present departments, thirty-three in number, into a small number of important executive departments; with further sub-divisions into bureaus. The legislative branch, which is at present bicameral, ought to be, according to Mr. Matthews, a single body, composed of from twenty-four to twenty-seven men elected for a term of three years. One of the strongest recommendations of the Mayor is for the radical re-organization of the system of police administration. Since 1885 this department has been in the hands of a State board appointed by the governor. It is suggested that the police department be again restored to the control of the city and placed in charge of a superintendent appointed by the mayor. The various elective officials, such as the Board of Street Commissioners, are to be placed under a system of mayoralty appointment. A similar reorganization of the Department of Education, to be placed under a superintendent appointed by the mayor, is recommended.

At the close of these suggestions for reform, the Mayor makes a statement which is extremely characteristic of the attitude of the State legislatures toward the cities, and throws not a little light upon the present condition of city government in the United States. In explaining why these reforms have not been pressed with greater energy by himself and others, he urges as an excuse that it would be impossible for a Democratic mayor to obtain any such changes from a Republican legislature. They would be looked upon as a scheme to benefit a Democratic administration. He expresses the hope that the incoming mayor, a Republican, will fare better at the hands of the legislature.

* "City Government of Boston." By NATHAN MATTHEWS, Jr., Mayor of Boston, 1891-95. The valedictory address to the members of the City Council, January 5, 1895. Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, State Printers.

Street Railways in Massachusetts.

The Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Board of Railroad Commissioners* gives a complete description of the street railway systems in the cities of the State. The fact that few of our States publish such reports accounts for the lack of information concerning the development and financial importance of the street railway system in the United States.

The report shows, in the first place, a remarkable increase in the electric railway system. Thus, as late as 1888, there was not a single mile of electric railway in operation in Massachusetts. The length of the horse railway system was 534 miles. By the end of 1894 it had decreased to 104 miles; the electric system having increased to 825 miles, making a total of 929 miles. This increase of a new system of street railway transportation has necessitated a large capital expenditure, which for the time being has diminished the dividends, so that in 1894 the average rate was 6.1 per cent compared with 6.9 per cent in 1893.

The advantage of the electric over the horse car system is not brought out quite as clearly as one would expect. In comparing the net earnings of the horse car system, we find the following percentage of increase in the accounts of the latter as compared with the former in 1888:

Net earnings per passenger	60.5 per cent.
Net earnings per car mile run	66.0 " "
Net earnings per round trip run	82.5 " "
Net earnings per mile of railway	50.87 " "
Cost of railway per mile	59.17 " "
Capitalization per mile	63.95 " "

The economy affected by the electric system is shown, however, by the fact that while in 1885 the percentage of operating expenses to income was 80.2 per cent in 1894 the proportion was but 69.51 per cent.

The last decade has shown a marvelous increase in the capital invested in street railway transportation. Thus, in 1885 the capital stock of all the street railway companies in Massachusetts was little more than \$8,000,000; in 1894 it was nearly \$27,000,000. During the same period the number of employes has increased from 4103 to 7451; the number of cars from 2114 to 4058; the total passengers carried from 100,746,786 to 220,464,099; while the number of horses used has decreased from 9785 to 2014. The report contains an analysis of

* "Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Board of Railway Commissioners." Public Document, No. 14. January, 1895. Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., State Printers.

the accounts of all the street railway companies within the State, making it comparatively easy for any municipality to determine the possible income that might be derived from a participation in the profits of such companies. The lack of trustworthy information on this point in most of our American cities has been one of the reasons for the absence of any just appreciation on the part of the population of the value of franchises granted to such companies.

San Francisco.—The citizens of San Francisco are about to vote upon a new charter framed in accordance with the Constitutional Amendment adopted in 1879, which gives to all cities with a population exceeding one hundred thousand,* the right to frame their own charters through an elective board of fifteen free-holders, which charter must be submitted to the people for adoption or rejection. In 1880 San Francisco made a first attempt to take advantage of this provision, but the charter adopted by the board of free-holders was rejected by the people. In 1882 another board was elected, but their charter shared the same fate. A third attempt in 1887 proved equally unsuccessful.

The present charter for the city was framed by a board of free-holders elected in November, 1894. It contains some radical changes in the form of government. The legislative power is vested in a Board of Supervisors consisting of twelve members elected on a general ticket for a term of two years. The main changes however, are found in the provisions relating to the executive departments, especially in the position of the mayor. He is to be elected for a term of two years and the appointment of all officers, whose election or appointment is not otherwise specially provided for, is placed in his hands. He is made ex-officio president of the board of supervisors. The Department of Public Works is placed under the management of three commissioners, constituting a board of public works to be appointed by the mayor for a period of four years, subject to removal by him. This board is to have full charge of the work on streets, sewers, public buildings, and the supervision of contracts connected therewith.

The educational system of the city is placed under the control and management of a board of five school directors appointed by the mayor for a period of four years. The Police Department is to be managed by a board of four police commissioners, appointed by the mayor for a term of four years. It is provided that the mayor shall not appoint more than two from the same political party. The Fire Department is placed under a similar board, similarly appointed. The Health Department, under a board of three members, and a Board of

* By subsequent amendments extended to cities with a population exceeding ten thousand.

Election Commissioners consisting of four members, are all appointed by the mayor for terms of two and four years respectively.

The charter, furthermore, contains important civil service provisions, applying to the main departments of the city government. A board of three civil service commissioners is provided for, to be appointed by the mayor for a term of three years. On the sixteenth of April, 1895, this charter is to be submitted to the people at a special election. If adopted by them, it must be submitted to the legislature, which has the right to accept or reject it *in toto*. If ratified by the legislature, it then becomes the organic law of the city, superseding its present charter and any special laws inconsistent with its provisions.

FOREIGN CITIES.

Berlin.—A recent report of the "*Fire Insurance Institute*" shows the increasing importance and usefulness of one of the oldest municipal institutions of Berlin. At the close of the last century the city organized what amounts to a mutual fire insurance association of property owners. Insurance against fire in this association was made obligatory upon every property owner, and the premium was made dependent upon the losses incurred during the year. In this way every property owner became interested in the fire-proof construction of every building within the city, which accounts to a very great extent for the strict enforcement of building regulations. The report shows that during the last year the buildings within the city were insured for over \$800,000,000, and that the loss by fire amounted to a little over \$150,000, or nine cents per capita of the population. When this is compared with the loss in other cities, the amount is insignificant. Thus, in New York the loss from fire in 1891 was \$3.86 per capita; in Chicago, \$2.44; in Philadelphia, \$2.34, and in Paris, 45c.

London.—The report of the Royal Commission on the "Unification of London,"* appointed in March, 1893, contains a very complete exposition of the peculiar administrative and financial conditions under which the great English metropolis has been living. The Commission, which was composed of the Hon. Leonard H. Courtney; Sir Thomas Henry Farrer; Mr. Robert D. Holt, Mayor of the City of Liverpool; Henry H. Crawford, Esq., Solicitor to the Corporation of the city of London; and Edward O. Smith, Esq., Town Clerk of the city of Birmingham, examined experts and parties interested at stated intervals from the ninth of June, 1893, until the eighth of June, 1894.

*The report is printed by Eyre & Spottiswoode, Fleet street, London. Vol. I, Minutes of Evidence, price, 5s. Vol. II, Special Reports, price, 5s. 7d. Vol. III, Report of the Commissioners, price, 1s. 3d.

The first volume of the report (620 quarto pages) contains the testimony of these witnesses. The second volume, which, for purposes of ascertaining the present condition of local government in Metropolitan London, is by far the most valuable, contains some twenty special reports upon such questions as the relation of the city of London to the surrounding vestries; the powers and duties of the various local authorities throughout the county; the position of the London County Council; the financial condition of the Corporation of the city of London; statistics concerning the local areas into which London is divided for various governmental and electoral purposes, etc. These reports tend to show the chaotic condition of administrative jurisdiction in the county of London.

The old city with its single square mile of area and a continually diminishing population (in 1891; 37,000) still retains many of the privileges of the mediæval corporation. It is true the "Metropolis Management Act" of 1885 gave to the enormous population of the present county of London a kind of central authority with jurisdiction extending over the entire area, but its powers were so restricted and traversed at every turn by the powers of the local vestry boards that a systematic and harmonious development of municipal institutions remained practically impossible. During the period between this act and the Local Government Act of 1888, the powers of this "Metropolitan Board of Works" were gradually increased; the "City," however, retaining the greater part of its former powers and privileges. The establishment of a representative County Council, which in 1888 succeeded to the old Metropolitan Board of Works, marked an important step toward giving to the county of London a strong central organization capable of co-ordinating the more important problems of local policy. The city was expressly exempted from the most important provisions; a state of affairs which in the lapse of time must necessarily become untenable. Immediately after the establishment of the County Council the efforts to bring the "City" within the ordinary jurisdiction of a central municipal authority were resumed with renewed vigor. The result was the appointment of a Royal Commission, and the present report. In the third volume the commissioners make their recommendations, to which is appended a report of a special committee of the Court of Common Council of the city, dissenting from the views of the Commission.

The Commission recommends that the government of the county of London be entrusted to a central representative authority; and that the present city should become merged into the county; the entire district being incorporated under the name of the "Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of London." The present local bodies or vestries

are to be reorganized and given a certain measure of independence as regards purely local matters, and governed through a mayor and elective council. The central authority is to consist of a Council of 122 councillors and twenty aldermen presided over by a Lord Mayor, who is to succeed to all the actual and traditional privileges of the Lord-Mayor of the "City." The property of the present city is to be vested in the new corporation, and the administration of the city police to be transferred to the Home Office until the question of the management of the police system of the county is definitely settled.

The report clearly shows a desire on the part of the Commission to make the transition to a unified form of municipal government as gradual as possible in order to make the changes acceptable to those sections now enjoying special privileges.

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"Municipal Reform Movements in the United States." By WM. H. TOLMAN, Ph. D., Secretary of the City Vigilance League, New York City. With an introductory chapter by the Rev. Chas. H. Parkhurst, D.D. Pp. 219. Price, \$1.00. New York: F. H. Revell Company, 1895. The volume of Mr. Tolman contains an account of the various movements for civic reform throughout the United States. It will be of special value to those contemplating the organization of societies for civic betterment, and contains many valuable hints concerning such work.

"Street Railway Investments: A Study in Values." By EDWARD E. HIGGINS. Pp. 102. New York: Street Railway Publishing Co., 1895. The volume by Mr. Higgins traces the growth of the passenger railway system in this country. The author has very wisely divided the subject so as to treat the various classes of cities separately. Thus, in seven chapters he deals with the surface railways in cities of a population of less than 15,000; of from 15,000 to 25,000; 25,000 to 35,000; 35,000 to 50,000; 50,000 to 100,000; 100,000 to 500,000, and finally of cities with a population of over 500,000. The statistical data which lack careful co-ordination, serve to show the important place occupied by this branch of public transportation service as a means of investment.

Magazine Articles.

In the *Review of Reviews* for April, Dr. Shaw gives an account of the activity of the more important reform associations throughout the United States. The common ends towards which they are all striving, such as, non-partisanship in local elections, freedom of the municipality from legislative interference, etc., are clearly shown.

In the *Engineering Magazine* for April, Mr. M. J. Francisco contributes an article on "The Municipal Ownership of Public

Corporations," which is a savage attack upon the extension of municipal functions beyond purely political action.

In the same number Mr. Allen R. Foote discusses the control of public-service corporations by municipalities.

Professor Frank J. Goodnow, of Columbia College, discusses the question of "Municipal Home Rule" in the *Political Science Quarterly* for March. The amendments to the Constitution of New York, with special reference to the provisions regarding special legislation are discussed. The author endeavors to show the utter inadequacy of the ordinary restrictions upon special legislation for cities. The only safe procedure seems to be the insertion of a definition of special legislation in the Constitution itself. Otherwise, there is danger that restrictions will be rendered of no effect through the liberal interpretation of the courts. The new Constitution of New York has done this through the insertion of a clause which specifically defines general and special city laws; the latter being those which relate to a certain city or to less than all the cities of a class.